

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AID-20

EB-11 AGR-20 COME-00 TRSE-00 IGA-02 OMB-01 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 DRC-01 /160 W

----- 121573

O R 021130Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3245

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CJCS WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 10607

E.O. 11652: BDS

TAGS: EGEN, EAID, CB

SUBJECT: RICE AIRLIFT FOR CAMBODIA

REF: STATE 194488

1. THE BATTAMBANG/PHNOM PENH RICE AIRLIFT GOT UNDERWAY OCTOBER 2 WITH 4 SORTIES FOR A TOTAL OF 52.8 MT. FROM THE SECOND DAY ON WE EXPECT TO AVERAGE 7 SORTIES AND 92.4 MT PER DAY.

2. A TWO MAN MEDTC TEAM ARRIVED IN BATTAMBANG SEPTEMBER 30. IT WAS JOINED THE NEXT DAY BY AN ECON OFFICER WHO ESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, AND ENLISTED THEIR FULL COOPERATION. THE MEDTC TEAM TOOK DELIVERY OF TWO KAF FORKLIFTS FLOWN IN BY USAF C-130 FROM KOMPONG SOM, SET UP RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH EMBASSY PHNOM PENH AND MADE THE
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NECESSARY CONTACTS AND COORDINATION WITH MILITARY AUTHORITIES AND

CIVILIAN OPERATIONS IN BATTAMBANG.

3. BECAUSE OF THE TIME CONSUMING TASK OF RIGGING 3 NETS ON EACH PALLET, A TOTAL OF ONLY 20 PALLETS WERE READIED ON THE AFTERNOON OF OCTOBER 1 FOR PICKUP ON THE NEXT DAY BY USAF C-130'S. EACH AIRCRAFT TAKES ON ONE PALLET WITH 20 SACKS OF 100 KILOS EACH AND FOUR WITH 28 SACKS EACH FOR A TOTAL OF 132 SACKS OR 13.2 MT. ON OCTOBER 2, OVER 40 PALLETS ARE TO BE READIED AND THIS RATE IS EXPECTED TO BE SUSTAINED EVERY DAY THEREAFTER. TARPAULINS AND PLASTIC SHEETING ARE ON HAND TO PROTECT LOADED PALLETS FROM INCLEMENT WEATHER.

4. RAMP SPACE AT BATTAMBANG AIRPORT IS QUITE LIMITED, AND HAS TO BE SHARED BY BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT. GIVEN THE FACT THAT ROUTE 5 HAS BEEN INTERDICTED BY THE ENEMY FOR SOME TIME, AIR TRAFFIC AT THE AIRPORT IS VERY CONGESTED. FOR THESE REASONS, IT IS NOT ANTICIPATED THAT MORE THAN 7 OR 8 SORTIES PER DAY, WEATHER PERMITTING, CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED FOR THE DURATION OF THE RICE AIRLIFT.

5. EXCELLENT COOPERATION IS BEING EXTENDED BY PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES. WITHOUT HESITATION, THE AIRBASE COMMANDER GAVE UP ALL HIS RAMP SPACE TO THE RICE TASK FORCE. WHEN IT WAS REPORTED TO THE GOVERNOR THAT TWO HOLES ON THE AIRSTRIP NEEDED IMMEDIATE REPAIRS, HE ARRANGED FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT TO WORK TILL MIDNIGHT ON OCTOBER 1 TO CORRECT THE SITUATION. ENDERS

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